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# Applied Creativity

University of Dayton

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# NEWS



SELECT LANGUAGE

Thursday April 6, 2017

## Applied Creativity

The University of Dayton will offer the nation's first academic certificate focused specifically on applied creativity.

The certificate in Applied Creativity for Transformation is open to undergraduates in any major. It introduces students to the creative competencies that today's job market demands.

“This certificate will propel a student’s education into the specialized and make them unique to the marketplace or workforce they are entering,” said Brian LaDuca, director of the Institute of Applied Creativity for Transformation (IACT). “It will add to their academic pursuits with a focus on developing a personal mission, using transdisciplinary learning and humanity-centered design.”

Education for innovation and adaptive leadership is an element of the strategic vision for the University unveiled by President Eric F. Spina on April 4. He challenged the University to become “the first university in the country in which every student will take at least one course on innovation, humanity-centered applied creativity, and entrepreneurial thinking.”

The certificate program, sponsored by the School of Engineering and housed in the University’s IACT at ArtStreet, is a first step to achieving that vision.

Junior biology major Karly Michel is among the 22 students currently enrolled in a pilot of the program. Michel, who plans to attend dental school after graduation, said she wanted to pursue the certificate to make the best of her time at UD, and to learn as much as possible to apply to her future career goals.

“The certificate is a tool for us to use in various fields and is a way we can better the world by approaching problems and solutions on a more personal and human level,” she said. “It will allow me to see the problems and tasks at hand in dental school differently than my peers.”

Mechanical engineering major Colin Joern said the pilot certificate courses have improved his teamwork skills and pushed him to ask more questions in all his classes.

“It challenged me and gave me the confidence to challenge the norm on a lot of issues,” he said. “I began to see my engineering courses with a changed perspective and began to ask more questions of my professors on why problems are approached in a certain way and how I might find alternative methods. I really started to get a better understanding of the material because I was asking these critical questions.”

The certificate’s foundational courses help students develop creative confidence. Other courses include such topics as engineering innovation, which provides entry-level experience in rapid prototyping and humanity-centered design. The program culminates in a two-part IACT experiential learning capstone.

“The School of Engineering’s strategic plan focuses on innovation, entrepreneurial thinking and research for the common good,” said Dean Eddy Rojas. “Our partnership with IACT is one more way our students will be able to develop those skills in the classroom and beyond.”

The first cohort of 10 students is expected to graduate with the certificate in May 2018. For more information on the program, contact IACT director Brian LaDuca at [bladuca1@udayton.edu](mailto:bladuca1@udayton.edu).